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EDITORIALS.

THE sixth International Geological Congress is of the past. It was arranged that it should be in Zurich, but a more proper statement would be that it was in Switzerland, for the real work of the Congress was done in nearly all parts of that republic,—in the Jura at the northwest, in the great valley separating the Jura and the Alps, in the Alps, and on the Italian lakes to the south.

The officers in charge of the Congress, with admirable judgment, decided that the important matters were not acts of legislation in reference to geology, but an opportunity for the geologists of the world to gain an acquaintance with the geology of Switzerland, and the methods of work of the Swiss geologists. With these as the controlling thoughts, a series of excursions was arranged, running over a month or more. In planning these, while the geological interest of the localities was a controlling factor, care was taken that the visitors should enjoy the magnificent scenery of Switzerland. The excursions had such variety and scope that each geologist was able to find at least one before the sessions at Zurich, and one after, which covered his particular line of work, and this whether he were a palæontologist, a structural geologist, a glacialist or a petrographer. The excursions were further divided into two classes: the first provided for those who did not care for, or were not able to endure physical hardship, and therefore were largely by carriage, steamboat, and railway; the second class, largely on foot, provided for those who were able to take long walks and endure severe climbing. The rendezvous for the excursions before the sessions were at various places in Switzerland. They were all well arranged so as to converge naturally at Zurich. After the Congress another set of excursions diverged from Zurich and converged at Lugano. Those before the Congress were in the Jura, those after in the Alps. All who went on

one journey before and one after the Congress were able to obtain a good general idea of these two grand mountain systems, and the great valley separating them.

In order that the excursions should have the greatest success, there were published in advance a new geological map of Switzerland by Heim & Schmidt, a number of special memoirs by various geologists, and an excellent official guidebook, an octavo volume of over 300 pages, with numerous figures, maps, and sections. This book has a large number of parts, each one pertaining to a particular excursion. In most cases each part has a general statement of the geology of the district traversed and a detailed account of the phenomena to be seen on each day of the journey.

If one may judge by the two excursions which the writer was able to attend, the conductors were masters of the geology of the area covered, and eager to make the expeditions both pleasant and profitable to all participating. Not only is this true, but the citizens of Switzerland seemed to regard the Congress as a national affair, and wherever the parties went, they were treated with the greatest consideration and entertained with lavish hospitality.

At the sessions at Zurich there was no attempt whatever to legislate on any scientific question of geology. The meeting differed chiefly from other gatherings of geologists in that it was international, and was therefore attended by an unusually large number of eminent men. At the general sessions exceptionally valuable papers were presented by some of the more prominent geologists. Papers of a more special nature were read before the several sections of General Geology, Stratigraphy and Palæontology, Mineralogy and Petrography, and Applied Geology. One could therefore listen to the papers which were of particular interest to him, without being under the necessity of hearing others.

The excursions and sessions afforded an excellent opportunity for mutual acquaintance and interchange of ideas. It will doubtless be the experience of each geologist who attended the Congress, as he reads the works of men with whom he has become acquainted, that they will bring to him the image of the person

who created the works. The friendships formed and the consequent sympathy with one another cannot fail to be a stimulus to mutual kindly criticism and helpful suggestion. The widening acquaintance in the past few years of many of the geologists of the world is without doubt one of the chief causes of the decline of unpleasant controversy. This bringing men together from all lands, and the formation of personal relations between them may perhaps be considered one of the most important functions of the International Congress. In this particular, if this be true, the last session was unsurpassed in importance by any previous one.

The only feeling of discontent which one brought away was grounded on the human limitation of indivisibility, for many interesting things were occurring at the same time. One wished not only to accompany one excursion before and another after the sessions, but two or more, and many found it very difficult to decide between them. The same may be said of the sessions. But this criticism is one which our brothers in Switzerland will doubtless take without hostility. The writer, and I have no doubt all other geologists foreign to Switzerland who came only with a desire for the advancement of geology, went away with a warm feeling of gratitude toward the Swiss geologists, who labored so long and faithfully to make the Congress what it was,—a high success.

C. R. V. H.

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THE explorer that enters a field whose sensational phases excite extreme popular interest must often pay the penalty of misinterpretation. His chief motive is easily supposed to spring from the sources of chief popular concern. It is not easy for the masses to suppose that he is stimulated by any higher interest than that which appeals most strongly to them. The discomfort of this is offset, in a certain way, by the popular tribute which is accorded him solely because his endeavor is misconstrued. His true purpose would be received with indifference. It is only when those whose interest takes a higher form share in the popular interpretation without sharing in the popular interest and applause, that the penalty becomes a proper source of

concern. When, for instance, in lieu of an effort to prove the insularity of Greenland, a race for the "fartherest north" appears as the prime motive of an expedition, the masses are all agog, but scientists become indifferent. An adventurous rush for the pole, and an effort to determine the rotundity of the ice cap, awaken diametrically opposite sentiments among the two classes. The interest of the one rises as that of the other falls.

As motives in all endeavors are doubtless more or less mixed, it will be fortunate if each class can find in every laudable enterprise a purpose congenial to its own point of view, provided always the hazard of the endeavor does not bar it out from legitimate undertakings. Beyond question, popular interest in Arctic exploration centres about the "fartherest north" and the attainment of the pole, and is grounded in the human factors of competitive courage, strength, sagacity, and luck; while scientific interest is chiefly centred upon the physical and biological features of the region considered as elements of our great environment, to know every part of which is prerequisite to knowing any part well. In so far, therefore, as proper endeavor falls within the limits of legitimate hazard, the conjunction of popular with scientific interest is a helpful source of support and promotion, and, in view of this, the true explorer may be challenged to take courageously the good and ill of personal interpretation until time shall bring its due, and presumably its true, adjudication.

The scientific factors in the work of Lieutenant Peary are worthy of note, quite apart from any admiration which his courage and perseverance may awaken. It should be more generally known that, during those portions of the season when his party have not been engaged in his great endeavor to complete the outlining of the northern and eastern coasts of Greenland and of the archipelago which is presumed to constitute its extension northward, they have been employed in the mapping of the western coast on a more detailed and accurate basis. This has not been confined to the portion near the headquarters of the party on Inglefield Gulf. Many additions have been made to existing knowledge of the coast all the way from Melville Bay

to Cape Alexander, and even beyond. Inglefield Gulf and its dependencies, which on our charts are little more than a caricature, have been outlined with considerable accuracy, the leading points about Bowdoin Bay being fixed by triangulation. Mr. Astrup has made a new map of Melville Bay, which, notwithstanding the prominent and grewsome part it has played in northern navigation, is laid down on the charts with great inaccuracy. The outlines of the inland ice, and the glacial tongues which protrude from it, have been delineated with much greater approach to accuracy than heretofore. Other geological features have received attention. As elsewhere indicated, in addition to the geographical features of the glaciers, some of their physical characteristics, including their rates of movement, have been studied.

The meteorological observations, in the hands of Mr. E. B. Baldwin, formerly in the United States Weather Service, have been commendably complete in plan and successful in execution. In kind and grade they have been essentially the same as those required at our weather stations of the first order. The barograph and the thermograph were not only successfully manipulated at headquarters, but were kept in operation upon a sledge during the journey on the inland ice in the stormy months of March and April, as was also the anemometer. *Continuous* records of the temperature and of the atmospheric pressure and movements were thus secured. This is, we believe, quite beyond precedent. Perhaps nothing can better show that Lieutenant Peary's expedition was something more than an adventurous rush for the "farthest north," or even for mere extent of coastal exploration, than this successful attempt to carry delicate instruments of continuous and exact record on a perilous trip, where every pound of burden and every expenditure of effort were matters of moment to the outcome.

This is not the place for an extended sketch of the scientific work of the expedition, but the citation of these items may aid in giving to genuine scientific interest and appreciation a tangible basis, quite apart from the humanistic phases of the enterprise that most attract the general attention.

T. C. C.